BAYARD RUSTIN

Courage to Change

Born in West Chester, Pennsylvania. Raised as a Quaker.

1912

Completed activist training of the American Friends Service Committee and moved to New York.

1930s

Organizer for the Young Communist League, which combated racial segregation and opposed America's involvement in World War II.

Worked for A. Philip Randolph, president premier black trade union, The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

1940s

Race Relations Secretary for FOR (Fellowship of Reconciliation), conducting Race Relations Institutes to facilitate understanding among racial groups; helped protect the property of Japanese-Americans imprisoned in internment camps .

A committed pacifist, Rustin refused to register for the draft or perform alternative service in Civilian Public Service. He served 3years in federal penitentiary.

Helped plan first "freedom ride" in the South. In North Carolina, Rustin served 22 days on a chain gang. His account of that experience, serialized in *The New York Post*, spurred investigations leading to the abolition of chain gangs there.

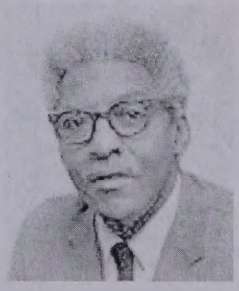
1950s

Openly gay and politically controversial Rustin was often relegated to a behind-the-scenes role. Arrested in on a "morals charge," he lost his job at the FOR, but was quickly offered another.

Assisted Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the early days of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Deputy Director and Chief Organizer of the 1963 March on Washington.

1960s

Helped form R-T-P, Inc. (Recruitment and Training Program), increasing minority participation in building and construction trades.



As Vice Chairman of International Rescue Committee, he traveled the world working to secure food, medical care, education, and proper resettlement for refugees from Vietnam & Cambodia to Haiti.

During all of this, Rustin recorded three albums and performed in theatre of New York, becoming a life member of Actors' Equity.

By Walter Naegle
Bayard Rustin's partner from 1977 until Rustin's death in 1987; Executor & Archivist of the Bayard Rustin Estate.

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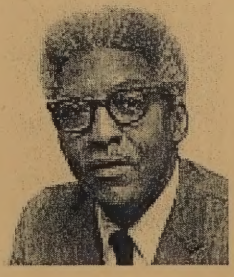

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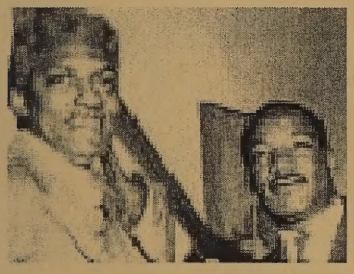

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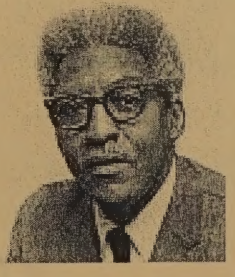

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